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"MAKING PUBLIC PLACES SACRED SPACES"

TITLE OF LESSON: Drawing Consensus for Collective Imprints

<http://collectiveimprints.blogspot.com/>

The Collective Imprints art installation is a collectively-produced work of visual art that celebrates the life and history of The Rotunda, local history and folklore, and visions for future neighborhoods and communities.

This piece will remain on permanent display at The Rotunda (in a most interesting place), reminding audiences and performers that The Rotunda is a vital connector that inspires genuine dialogue and social change.

Collective Imprints, the first project of its kind in Philadelphia, is unique in that it employed dialogue, movement, music-making, and holistic collaboration from all participants. The general public was welcome to brainstorm, move, make music, draw, paint, and collaborate on designs. Never before has such a long term multi-faceted and inclusive project been open to the general public in this city. We believe that future projects will be born of this, fostering long lasting connections between disparate communities.

Collective Imprints was conceived in early 2007 by, among others, local community artist, muralist, and activist Michael B. Schwartz, and launched its first collaborative session on November 6, 2007. The work did not stop until the paint was dry last week.

The project started off with eye-opening and inclusive conversations about notions of belonging, place, community, activism, The Rotunda's mission, the arts, power of the people, and more. We also brought movement into the work as we explored new ways of brainstorming, using exercises shared by West Philadelphia multi-faceted artist Jodi Netzer. In addition, Bill Feiger, of Stares to Nowhere and other local acts, shared his musical instruments from around the world as we used sound and music to evoke even more ideas.

Shortly thereafter, we began to draw and paint images based on ideas spawned during conversations and movement exploration. Nearly 150 people participated, seeking to strengthen connections within the greater Rotunda community while building a sense of ownership and interconnectivity to the surrounding area.

Participants ranged from 5 year old school children to college students, teachers, doctors, professors, truck drivers, homemakers, and much more. On Martin Luther King, jr. Day alone, nearly 80 people spent their Day of Service working on Collective Imprints!

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